

FLEXIBILITY IN ANNUAL CATCH LIMIT MANAGEMENT RESPONSE, SCOPING

In June 2017, the Council initiated scoping on a possible Groundfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP) amendment to consider integrating an average catch policy in the groundfish management framework. National Standard 1 (NS1) guidelines, which specify how to manage fisheries to achieve optimum yields on a continuing basis while preventing overfishing, were revised last year to provide more management flexibility (Attachment 1). Section 600.310(e)(3) of the NS1 guidelines (starting on page 5 in Attachment 1) describes a multi-year approach to determine overfishing status, which allows a determination of overfishing status based on a period of no more than 3 years. Determining overfishing status using a multi-year approach may obviate the need to close a fishery inseason if a relatively rare series of catch events risks exceeding an annual catch limit (ACL). The Council received comments from the [Groundfish Management Team](#) (GMT) and the [Groundfish Advisory Subpanel](#) (GAP) in June recommending a multi-year approach. The Council tasked the GMT and GAP with developing a draft purpose and need statement which articulates the need for such a policy, and report to the Council at this meeting. The Council also tasked the GMT and GAP with providing examples of how a new multi-year average catch policy would work. As part of their June actions, the Council also asked the National Marine Fisheries Service to report back at this meeting on whether establishment of a new multi-year policy will require an amendment to the FMP.

The revised NS1 guidelines also allow consideration for two new carryover provisions, which allow some unused harvestable surplus to be carried over from one year to the next. This is different than the carryover rules allowed in the current trawl catch shares program where a portion of unused quota in an individual fishing quota account can be carried over from one year to the next in that these provisions would allow carryover at the ACL/acceptable biological catch level and therefore could benefit all sectors of the fishery. The Council received a briefing on these new carryover provisions in November 2016 under [Agenda Item C.2](#) and initiated scoping on these provisions in March 2017 under [Agenda Item C.2](#). Considerations for developing and implementing these new carryover provisions presented in March are reproduced here in Attachment 2. The Council scheduled further, more detailed scoping of these new carryover provisions at this meeting with a consideration for incorporating the analysis informing an FMP amendment in the 2019-2020 groundfish harvest specifications process.

The Council task at this meeting is scope both a multi-year approach for determining overfishing status and considerations and analyses needed to add new carryover provisions to the FMP.

Council Action:

Scope a Multi-Year Average Catch Policy and Carryover Provisions and Provide Guidance on Future Analyses and Considerations.

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item E.5, Attachment 1: National Standard 1 – Optimum Yield.
2. Agenda Item E.5, Attachment 2: Considerations and Focus Questions for the Carryover Provisions Envisioned in Revised National Standard 1 Guidelines.

Agenda Order:

- E.5 Flexibility in Annual Catch Limit Management Response, Scoping John DeVore
- a. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
 - b. Public Comment
 - c. **Council Action:** Scope a Multi-Year Average Catch Policy and Carryover Provisions, and Provide Guidance on Future Analyses and Considerations

PFMC
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